

DISC IN POCKET



[a]drift

"If we are to protect the world's multitude of places and creatures, then we must know them, not just conceptually, but imaginatively as well."

Wendell Berry, Life is a Miracle

The ocean is my place of contemplation and delight. Puttering in the inter-tidal amidst the scattering of stars and rabbit-eared seaweed or paddling among the kelp jungles and jellyfish, I am lost in the awe and wonder of discovery. I am not alone in this. The ocean, our primeval mother, is where life began; a trip to the beach is a sort of homecoming as people gather there for rest and re-creation.

But, with climate change, the oceans are becoming warmer and more acidic, less hospitable to life. Optimists reason that life on Earth has survived catastrophic change before and will again. But what kind of impoverished life awaits those who survive? How have we come to this impasse in our relationship with nature? What kind of shift in thinking is required to turn things around?

Over the past decade, a number of writers have endeavored to deconstruct what we mean by *nature*. William Cronon has suggested that the trouble with nature, or wilderness, is that it is largely an illusion of a distant and undisturbed refuge and its existence permits us to abrogate our responsibility to look after the places where we actually live. Bruno Latour and Timothy Morton believe that the problem is that nature, as a monolithic and immutable source of raw materials and a sublime backdrop to human activity, does not exist. What does exist is a diverse collective of plants and animals, earth, air and water. Latour and Morton insist that we need to consider the interests of other species and recognize their



personhood and right to exist; since our vulnerabilities are interwoven, our survival is contingent on theirs. Latour has proposed a new way of including ecology within politics, that is, a new constitution where all stakeholders, human and non-human alike, are given a voice for the common good. He suggests that scientists, in their capacity for enquiry into the non-human world, speak on behalf of the non-human.

But can scientists alone adequately do this? Personhood implies particularity. Wendell Berry has noted that while scientific enquiry focuses on the specific, its interpretation and application is generalized, sometimes to the point of doing violence to the particular. Art, on the other hand, focuses on the particular as subject. The role of the artist, to paraphrase Paul Klee, is to make visible the invisible; the role of the scientist is to make known the unknown. Perhaps both can speak on behalf of the non-human.

For some time, I have contemplated how to merge the worlds of art and science in my own practice. I've been inspired by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the eighteenth-century poet, playwright and aspiring scientist, and Ernst Haeckel, the nineteenth-century biologist and illustrator. I took my cue from them; for one year, I employed methods from science to collect and analyze monthly plankton samples at Whaler Bay, B.C., and then documented and interpreted my observations through images.

Images of nature in art have historically been relegated to the fringes, as naturalist illustration and pastoral or sublime landscape. I elected to work with portraiture, an art form traditionally reserved for humans, and made portraits of individual organisms, carefully avoiding the scientific habit of splaying them out for identification, but working with them as characters, in the actual poses I observed. To convey their ecological importance, I made the portraits human life-sized.

While the images are mimetic, they reveal forms that are unfamiliar and fantastic, making visible the invisible.

I chose the medium of printmaking, fitting for representing living things. The art of making images from a plate or stencil imitates the reproduction of life, each living organism an expression of a genetic matrix. Printmaking embraces many forms, from the ancient traditional craft of woodcut to the highly technological media of digital photography and video. Woodcut, where every mark is made by hand, embodies the subjectivity and interpretation of the artist. There is an element of the contemplative in the quiet deliberations of where and how each mark is made on the surface of the plate, requiring patience and devotion reminiscent of monks illuminating medieval manuscripts. Photography and video, mediated by technology and detached from the artist, is the medium of choice for depicting "reality". Like science, it presents the illusion of objectivity. Using digital media, artists combine diverse images into cohesive compositions, much as scientists, employing statistics, transform apparently random data points into coherent narratives.

The dichotomies of science and art are mirrored by those of observation and interpretation, of new technology and traditional craft, of objectivity and subjectivity, and ultimately of object and subject. In trying to bridge this divide, I often found myself adrift in a tide of contradiction. The liminal space between the two is fraught with collision: they crash against each other, like the sea against the coastline, the waters murky and difficult to navigate. But turbulence regenerates nutrients that stimulate growth. Here dichotomies can meet and be reconciled. The old and new can work together as observation and interpretation merge. The moving picture, fluid and ephemeral, can present a healing dialectic where observer becomes subject and creature becomes character.

## **Bibliography**

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File Name: krause01 Title: Gallery 1

File Name: krause02

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

Date: 2010

Materials: digital print, plywood Dimensions: 12 panels, each 20"x30"

File Name: krause03

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: September 2009

File Name: krause04

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: October 2009

File Name: krause05

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: November 2009

File Name: krause06

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: December 2009

File Name: krause07

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: January 2010

File Name: krause08

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: February 2010

File Name: krause09

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: March 2010

File Name: krause10

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: April 2010

File Name: krausel 1

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: May 2010



File Name: krause12

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: June 2010

File Name: krause13

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: July 2010

File Name: krause14

Title: [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 – 08/2010]: Year in Review

detail: August 2010

File Name: krause15

Title: [The Scientific Method] *Under Scrutiny* 

Date: 2011

Materials: video, microscope, MP3 player, wood, aluminum, desk, stool

File Name: krause16

Title: [The Scientific Method] *Under Scrutiny* detail

File Name: krause17
Title: [Much] Ado

Date: 2011

Materials: video, television

File Name: krause18 Title: Gallery 2

File Name: krause19

Title: [Observation] *Interpretation I* 

Date: 2011

Materials: digital print, woodcut, silk organza, plywood, plexiglass

Dimensions: 22.25"x30"

File Name: krause20

Title: [Observation] Interpretation II

Date: 2011

Materials: digital print, woodcut, silk organza, plywood, plexiglass

Dimensions: 22.25"x30"



File Name: krause21

Title: [Observation] Interpretation III

Date: 2011

Materials: digital print, woodcut, silk organza, plywood, plexiglass

Dimensions: 22.25"x30"

File Name: krause22 Title: Gallery 3

File Name: krause23

Title: [Liminal] Space II

Date: 2011

Materials: digital print, woodcut, silk organza, plywood, plexiglass

Dimensions: 40"x60"

File Name: krause24

Title: [Liminal] Space I

Date: 2011

Materials: digital print, woodcut, silk organza, plywood, plexiglass

Dimensions: 40"x60"

File Name: krause25

Title: [In] Black and White

Date: 2010

Materials: woodcut, plywood

Dimensions: 40"x60"

File Name: krause26

Title: [Antediluvian] Home Movies

Date: 2011

Materials: video, cotton and dowel screen

Dimensions: 74"x86"

File Name: krause27 Title: Gallery 4

File Name: krause28

Title: [Larva Stage]: Barnacle

Date: 2009 Materials: woodcut Dimensions: 41"x53"



File Name: krause29

Title: [Larva Stage]: Tubeworm

Date: 2010 Materials: woodcut Dimensions: 41"x58"

File Name: krause30

Title: [Larva Stage]: Oyster

Date: 2010 Materials: woodcut Dimensions: 42"x53"

File Name: krause31 Title: Gallery 5

File Name: krause32

Title: [Adult Stage]: Water Flea

Date: 2009 Materials: woodcut Dimensions: 38"x43"

File Name: krause33

Title: [Larva Stage]: Sea Slug

Date: 2010 Materials: woodcut Dimensions: 38"x58" [Larva Stage]: Sea Slug

File Name: krause34

Title: [Larva Stage]: Jellyfish

Date: 2009 Materials: woodcut Dimensions: 42"x51"

File Name: krause35

Title: [Larva Stage]: Sea Star

Date: 2010 Materials: woodcut Dimensions: 33"x58"



File Name: krause36

Title: [Larva Stage]: Sea Urchin

Date: 2010 Materials: woodcut Dimensions: 39"x58"

File Name: krause37

Title: [The] Survivors

Date: 2011

Materials: video installation with mirrored dome, concrete blocks

Dimensions: room 14'x14'x12'

File Name: krause38
Title: [The] Survivors

Date: 2011

Materials: video installation with mirrored dome, concrete blocks

Dimensions: room 14'x14'x12'

File Name: krause39

Title: [The Scientific Method] *Under Scrutiny* 

Date: 2011 Materials: video

Duration: 5 minutes 18 seconds

File Name: krause40

Title: [Much] Ado segment

Date: 2011 Materials: video

Duration: segment: 1 minute 44 seconds; entire video: 8 minutes 31 seconds

File Name: krause41

Title: [Antediluvian] *Home Movies* segment

Date: 2011 Materials: video

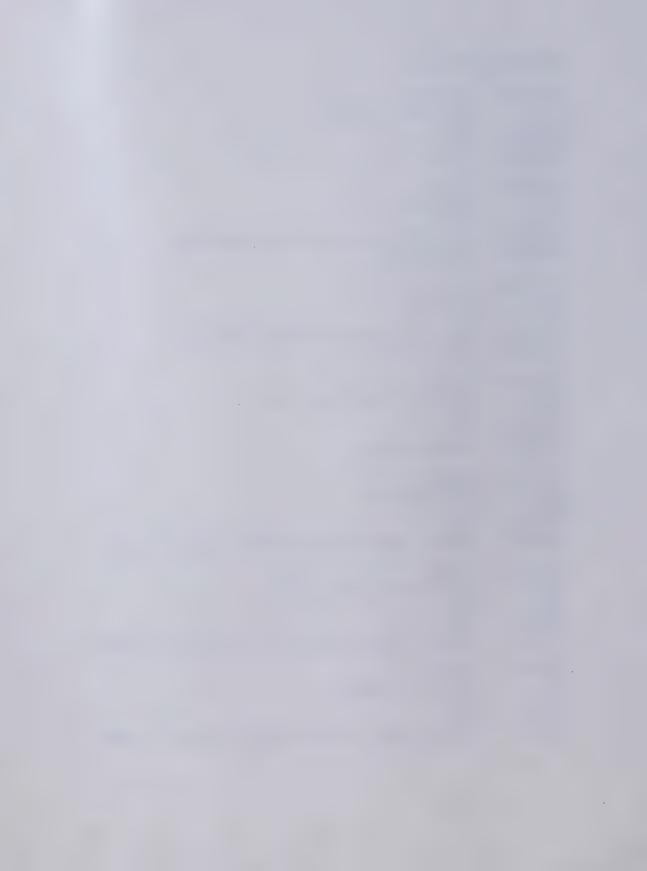
Duration: segment: 4 minutes 11 seconds; entire video: 20 minutes 39 seconds

File Name: krause42

Title: [The] Survivors segment

Date: 2011 Materials: video

Duration: segment: 9 minutes 21 seconds; entire video: 38 minutes 15 seconds

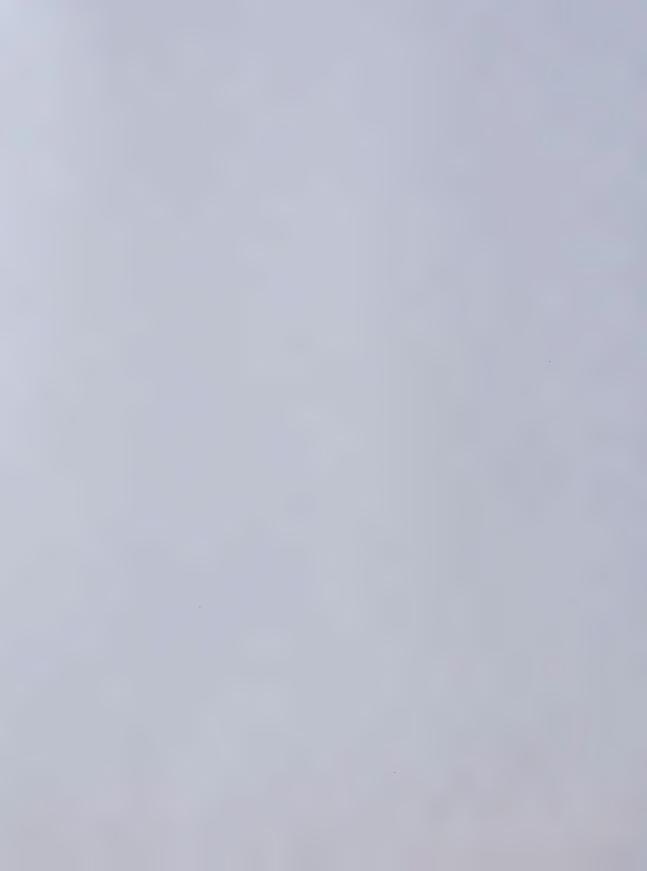






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- 4. [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 08/2010]: Year in Review detail: December 2009
- 5. [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 08/2010]: Year in Review detail: March 2010
- 6. [Whaler Bay Plankton Survey: 09/2009 08/2010]: Year in Review detail: June 2010
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- 30. [The] *Survivors*2011; video installation with mirrored dome, concrete blocks; room 14'x14'x12'

